

***ROLE OF SOCIAL SERVICE IN IMPARTING VALUE EDUCATION TO
COLLEGE STUDENTS***

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ABSTRACT

Colleges are the temples of learning. Along with imparting knowledge, colleges play the role of creating responsible human beings. This paper explores the challenges faced by the young students and how social service can be used as a tool to overcome their problems. Social service can play a key role not just in improving the society but in shaping the students as well. Examples of National Service Scheme (NSS) and two Rotaract clubs have been taken to understand the impact of social service on the participating students.

Key words : Social service, value education, college students

Introduction

College is a place where young minds gain knowledge and prepare themselves for their future careers. It is also a time where the learners are quite mature yet impressionable enough to learn, unlearn and relearn. Thus, if tapped correctly, these college students can be imparted the necessary qualities for their future lives – for the progress of themselves and that of the nation. Data from the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India reveals that there are more than 2.96 crore students pursuing higher education in the country. Of this, 2.35 crore students are enrolled in degree courses, 33.7 lakh students are pursuing post-graduation while the rest are registered in doctorate, diploma, certificate and integrated courses. It is important that these college students are guided correctly but imparting value education so that they may not tread the wrong paths, but become upright citizens of the country. Involving the youth in social services activities is one method of providing them life skills and at the same time providing them a role in nation building.

Objectives of the Study:

- 1) To understand what is social service
- 2) How social service evolved in India
- 3) To examine the purpose of education
- 4) To find out the problems faced by college students
- 5) To find out the benefits which students can derive by being part of social service organizations
- 6) To find out how institution-based social service organisations are imparting value education to their members

Research Methodology:

The data has been collected from several secondary sources. Books and several internet sites were referred.

SOCIAL SERVICE

The Encyclopaedia Britannica describes social service as, “any of numerous publicly or privately provided services intended to aid disadvantaged, distressed, or vulnerable persons or groups.” It further states that the basic concerns of social welfare—poverty, disability and disease, the dependent young and elderly—are as old as society itself.

Indeed, in the joint family form of system, the disabled, ill and old were automatically looked after by the others in the family without considering them as a burden. However, these vulnerable people got pushed to the fringes and even pushed out of the family with the evolution of the nuclear family system. Single income-multiple mouths became the order of the day, putting tremendous burden on the bread-winner of the family. Even when the joint family system existed, persons suffering from communicable diseases like leprosy were shunted out from the society and had to live away from mainstream society. However, few people looked beyond their own needs and reached out to these despised sections of society. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Baba Amte, Mother Teresa are some of the famous social workers in India. Even various religious institutions in India have been engaged in providing service to the needy beyond the bar of caste and religion.

The realm of social service in India began to get more organised with the advent of international social service organisations like Rotary International, Giants International and Lions Club International. The corporates in India like State Bank of India, Yes Bank (Yes Foundation) and Hindustan Unilever (Project Shakti, Hand Washing Behaviour Change Programme, Prabhat, etc.) have also taken up Corporate Social Responsibility projects with great enthusiasm.

The programmes conducted for social upliftment can be broadly classified as under :-

- Social services – programmes that serve the general population – e.g., health care and education

- Welfare services – aid directed to vulnerable groups – e.g., aid to the poor, the disabled, or the delinquent

THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Education is not meant to only impart technical skills to the learners to enable them to earn income, but to help the pupils to explore themselves and utilise their potential for family, social, religious as well as national purposes. Education is of no good if it teaches one to earn money, but doesn't teach how to use the money, how to be happy, how to make others happy and lead a fulfilled life. Thus, education must not just impart knowledge but also 'values' and 'life skills' to the students.

The Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations of Education, NCERT published a framework 'Education for Values in Schools'. It describes value educations as "Education is necessarily a process of inculcating values to equip the learner lead a life – a kind of life that is satisfying to the individual in accordance with the cherished values and ideals of the society. Philosophers, spiritual leaders and educationists of our country, all in various ways, have emphasized the role of education for 'character development', 'bringing out the latent potentialities and inherent qualities' and developing an 'integrated personality' for the well being of the individual and the society at large."

Youth is the time when one's creativity is at its best, energy is enormous and the 'never say die' spirit is at its peak. It is also a time when the mind is impressionable. The students can be moulded and taught good values, at the same time directing their energies for good and fruitful purposes.

PROBLEMS FACED BY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Several students studying in colleges come from dysfunctional families. Some students indulge in violence and crime as well as vices like alcohol, cigarettes and drugs. The youth get attracted to the negative sides of life portrayed through mass media. The youth are being carried away by the attractions of mindless consumerism and commercialization of human existence. The idea of wanting all the best things 'right now' makes students impatient, brash and uncaring towards others.

When making money becomes the only 'value' and not how one makes it, what becomes the first casualty in society are our 'VALUES'. Many consider their life a success only if they 'succeed' in earning millions in the shortest possible time. The 'how' of making it is not given importance. This can lead to the development of many harmful tendencies among the young students.

USE OF SOCIAL SERVICE TO IMPART VALUE EDUCATION TO COLLEGE STUDENTS

Social service can be used as a tool to impart good values to the students. The young students can learn values like caring, understanding, warmth, kindness, friendliness, cleanliness, soft-speech, courteousness, forgiveness, respectfulness, patience and perseverance while reaching out to the less privileged or less informed sections of society. Social service is normally a group activity whereby one can hone qualities like co-operation, tolerance, team work, imagination, creativity, responsibility as well as leadership. They can be taught that sharing is the best way to progress. They will also get a sense of achievement by working for their less fortunate brethren. Moreover, they would not have time to indulge in any undesirable activities like drugs. Their time and energy can be channelized correctly and fruitfully. Social service can be used as a tool to reign in several negative and harmful tendencies among students and spread positive values and attitudes.

The government of India introduced the National Service Scheme (NSS) in 1969 in various universities to conduct various social service programs. Students as well as teachers are a part of the programme. The objectives of NSS are described as :-

- i. understand the community in which they work
- ii. understand themselves in relation to their community
- iii. identify the needs and problems of the community and involve them in problem-solving
- iv. develop among themselves a sense of social and civic responsibility
- v. utilise their knowledge in finding practical solutions to individual and community problems
- vi. develop competence required for group-living and sharing of responsibilities
- vii. gain skills in mobilising community participation
- viii. acquire leadership qualities and democratic attitudes
- ix. develop capacity to meet emergencies and natural disasters and
- x. practise national integration and social harmony

Besides NSS, several colleges also have their own social service cells. Various colleges have introduced international social service clubs like Rotaract Club and Leo Club in their institutions. The motto of Rotaract is 'Self Development through Service and Fellowship'. It indicates that social service can be used as a tool for development of oneself along with development of the society.

The NCERT's framework 'Education for Values in Schools' rightly highlights the role social service can play in shaping the individual. "The mark of an educated person, wrote Plato in The Republic, is the willingness to use one's knowledge and skills to solve the problems of society. Education must imbue children with a proactive social conscience. Society is the empowering context for individuals. No one can become fully human or attain dignity and fulfillment outside the web of relationships and responsibilities presupposed in society. True education equips individuals to live creatively, responsibly, and peaceably in a society and become agents of change for a better society."

EXAMPLE 1: ROTARACT CLUB OF BIRLA COLLEGE (KALYAN, MAHARASHTRA)

The Policy Manual of Rotaract Club of Birla College states its Vision as “To make students more Responsible Youth in the years of their Rotaraction with the club” and its Mission as “To help students understand the moral values by experimenting them on the society, where they get connected with the society through various avenues”.

The Club has conducted social service projects such as Friendship with Nature (celebration of Friendship day in an orphanage and shramdaan), Courtesy Calling (encouraging people to follow basic civic sense and discipline while visiting different Ganpati mandals), Piece of Paper (Notebooks were prepared from unused waste papers and were distributed to the students of Zilla Parishad School, Khardi), Charity Smiles (The project was to appreciate the Nurses for their valuable service to the society), C-Happiness (Celebrating Childrens Day in unique manner with spending quality time with children at Mukta Jeevan Ashram, Vashind). Such projects enlighten the youngsters towards the various problems faced in society as well as towards the needs of various sections of society.

Projects such as celebration of International Parents Day (instilling in the young students values of caring for one’s parents), Grab the Queen (Carrom Tournament - The project was conducted to bring out the sportsmanship spirit amongst the Rotaractors as well as Non Rotaractors.), Swaraksha (Self defence techniques was taught to female Rotaractors), Listen to your Soul (Powerpoint Presentation Competition on occasion of World Aids Day) are targetted towards bringing about physical and personality development of the students of Birla College.

EXAMPLE 2: ROTARACT CLUB OF NM COLLEGE (MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA)

The website of Rotaract Club of NM College states what the club does as, “Indeed to polish yourself an asset to where you belong. It deals with activities which directly target the youth

and benefit them like career guidance programs, public speaking sessions, interactive speaker sessions, personal skills building. However it teaches them to seek results not perfection, be willing to take risks, seem spontaneous, be aggressive listeners, expand your world, dare-dream challenges, to not escape but adapt, and essentially to live according to our deepest convictions and abilities- aspiring to be unique while respecting the rights of others. Goal-setting has always been on mind, the emotional and academic advancement of all our members. So that they are not just the people who stand in the crowd, but lead and follow through when the crisis is over being the intrepid fighter for their ambitions.”

Suggestions:

Universities and colleges should have social service associations. Students should be actively encouraged to be a part of these associations. The day-to-day affairs of the club should be handled by the students so that they get hands-on experience of administration, develop interpersonal as well as decision-making skills. Faculties should play the role of mentor and guide. The social service associations should plan programs in such a manner that students would get opportunities to hone a wide range of skills at the same time reaching out to the needy sections of society.

Conclusion:

"Education should not be the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."

- William Butler Yeats

True education liberates the mind from cynicisms, develops an all-inclusive approach and teaches one to live as a true human being. Social service develops various positive qualities in the person rendering service and can be used as an effective tool to impart value education to college students.

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